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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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INFO /000 W SS 35, GPM 3, SP 2, H 2, L 3, P-4, USIA 12, NSC 10, INR 7, CIA 4, DOD 1, RSR 1, RSC 1, SAL/MC6

O R 221245Z AUG 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5102
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3874
AMEMBASSY VIENTINAE 2235
AMCONSUL DANANG 769
CINCPAC

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Szuberg DATE 10/6/81
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER KY TELEVISION ADDRESS

1. IN SPEECH BROADCAST ON TELEVISION AND RADIO EVENING AUGUST 21, PRIME MINISTER KY DEFENDED GVN ROLE IN ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND CALLED FOR MORE BALANCED VIEW ON PART OF CRITICS.

2. KY NOTED THAT ALL CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN FREE TO AIR THEIR OPINIONS IN STATEMENTS ON RADIO AND TV, IN PRESS CONFERENCES

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AND AT ELECTION RALLIES. HE ALSO POINTED TO LIFTING OF CENSORSHIP AND SAID THAT "AT NO TIME IN HISTORY OF VIET-NAM HAVE JOURNALISTS BEEN GIVEN SO MUCH FREEDOM." CONTENT OF CANDIDATES' STATEMENTS AMPLY ILLUSTRATE EXTENT OF THAT FREEDOM. ALL OF THIS, KY ADDED, WILL HELP PEOPLE MAKE THEIR CHOICE AND IS A SIGN OF PROGRESS TOWARD DEMOCRACY.

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3. HOWEVER, KY REGRETTED THAT PERSONAL RECRIMINATIONS HAD ENTERED INTO ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN, PROVOKING SUSPICION AMONG THE PEOPLE AND DAMAGING NATIONAL UNITY. KY SAID THAT GOVERNMENT HAS TRIED TO SECURE FREEDOM OVER PAST TWO YEARS AND THAT FREEDOM IS ESSENTIAL IN ELECTIONS. HOWEVER, MISUSE OF FREEDOM IN TIME OF WAR IS HARMFUL IF IT WEAKENS CONFIDENCE OF PEOPLE IN THEIR LEADERS. HE APPEALED TO CANDIDATES TO REFRAIN FROM PERSONAL CRITICISM IN CAMPAIGN WHICH COULD HARM PRESTIGE OF FUTURE ELECTED GOVERNMENT. CANDIDATES MAY BE LEADERS SOMEDAY, THEREFORE THEIR PRESTIGE SHOULD BE PROTECTED.

4. KY WENT ON TO EXPRESS HIS REGRET THAT CANDIDATES HAVE

NOT GIVEN GVN CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE, BUT HAVE ONLY FOUND FAULT WITH IT, SOMETIMES CRITICIZING IT FOR IMAGINARY MISTAKES. HE DESCRIBED COMING ELECTIONS AS CONTINUATION OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF PEOPLE AND ARMY OVER MANY YEARS. KY CALLED FOR UNDERSTANDING AND EFFORTS BY THE PEOPLE TO INSURE FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS. HE ASSURED AUDIENCE THAT GVN AT ALL LEVELS HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO KEEP ELECTIONS FREE AND IMPARTIAL. KY ADDED THAT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES HAVE BEEN DIRECTED TO COORDINATE WITH ELECTION CAMPAIGN COMMITTEES TO ASSIST CANDIDATES. HE SAID THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SHORTCOMINGS, BECAUSE OF VIET-NAM'S SPECIAL SITUATION, BUT THAT GOVERNMENT HAS TRIED TO OVERCOME THEM.

5. KY SAID THAT GVN HAS MADE DEVOTED EFFORT IN PAST TWO YEARS TO BUILD DEMOCRACY. BECAUSE OF THAT EFFORT SITUATION HAS BEEN STABILIZED, MAKING ELECTIONS POSSIBLE. GVN WILL CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS IN DAYS TO COME. KY CONCLUDED WITH REMINDER TO PEOPLE TO FOLLOW ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN CLOSELY SO THAT THEY CAN MAKE WISE CHOICE ON SEPTEMBER 3.

6. COMMENT: KY'S REMARKS WERE, BY AND LARGE, WELL TAKEN.

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HOWEVER, ADDRESS WAS NOT ONE OF SERIES OF TV-RADIO APPEARANCES AGREED UPON BY CENTRAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE. CIVILIAN CANDIDATES MAY CHARGE THAT IT VIOLATED EQUAL FACILITIES PROVISIONS OF ELECTORAL LAW.

BUNKER

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